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Legislators gather for prayer luncheon

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Mississippi legislators and other elected officials were the guests of Mississippi Baptists on January 11 for the prayer event that has become a staple of legislators' time in Jackson each January during their annual session.

"There's no lobbying or bare knuckle politics; it's simply Mississippi Baptists' way of showing how much we appreciate legislators who have to put aside so much of their family and business interests to come to Jackson each year and represent us," said Jimmy Porter, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission, the Mississippi Baptist Convention agency that sponsors the event.

"We want them to know that there is a huge group of people who are concentrating prayer on them and the decisions they will make that will affect all of us. They understand the weight of what they are doing and are thankful for prayers on their behalf," he said.

A legislators prayer breakfast has been held for several years in the Baptist Building in Jackson, across President Street from the Mississippi Capitol where legislators convene for the first three months of each year. For the 2007 event, the time was switched to a luncheon.

Mickey Dalrymple, pastor of Fairview Church, Columbus, and president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, was the keynote speaker. Dalrymple also spoke earlier that morning at the convention board's chapel service.

Legacy, a women's quartet from First Church, Columbia, provided music for the luncheon and also performed during the chapel service.



LEGISLATORS LUNCHEON — Attending the 2007 Mississippi Baptist Legislators Luncheon were (from left) Stacey Pickering, senator from Laurel; Eric Clark, Mississippi Secretary of State and member of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; Tom King Jr., senator from Petal; Mickey Dalrymple, pastor of Fairview Church, Columbus, and president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; Alan Nunnelee, senator from Tupelo; and Jimmy Porter, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

"I want to thank the legislators who attended the prayer luncheon. There were three events they could have chosen to attend, and they spent their lunch break with us. Some legislators couldn't pull away from their duties at the time and be with us, but several called later in the day to let us know they were with us in spirit," Porter said.

Among the Mississippi Baptist legislators who attended were Cindy Hyde-Smith, member of Macedonia Church, Brookhaven; Tom King Jr., member of Petal-Harvey Church, Petal; Alan Nunnelee, member of Calvary Church, Tupelo; Perry Lee, member of First Church,

Mendenhall; Stacey Pickering, member of First Church, Laurel; and Richard White, member of Wynndale Church, Terry.

Mississippi Secretary of State Eric Clark, member of First Church, Brandon, and member of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, was the highest-ranking Baptist state official to attend the luncheon.

For more information on the legislators prayer event and the ministries of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission, contact Porter at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Tel: (601) 292-3329 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 329. E-mail: rwood@christianaction.com.

Annie Armstrong Offering sets new record in 2006: \$58M

TALLADEGA, Ala. (BP) — Giving to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering (AAEO) for North American Missions topped \$58 million for the first time ever in 2006, exceeding last year's goal by more than two million dollars.

Carlos Ferrer, North American Mission Board (NAMB) interim executive vice president for missionary services, shared the news with national and state leaders of Woman's Missionary Union (wMu), gathered for their board meeting at Shocco Springs Conference Center in Talladega, Ala.

"Today, we want to express our gratitude to all Southern Baptists who so generously shared their resources with us so even more can go to missions in North America," Ferrer told the group January 15. "In addition, I want to tell our friends at wMu a special thank you for everything you do each year to promote the offering. We know your support is critical to our success."

Ferrer reported that because of the increased offering NAMB will be consulting with state convention partners

to put additional missions resources on the field in 2007. "We want you to know that every bit of this blessing will go directly to do the missions work so needed here on our continent," he said.

Ferrer presented wMu leaders with an oversized "Thank You" card signed by dozens of NAMB missionaries and staff members.

"Thank you for such a wonderful expression of gratitude," national wMu President Kaye Miller said in accepting the card. "It is a privilege to partner with NAMB and Southern Baptist churches in supporting missionaries ministering across North America."

Ferrer called AAEO an example of one of the things Southern Baptists do so well. "The power of partnership is nowhere more evident than in the way Southern Baptists join their minds, hearts and resources to support missions," he said. "We are privileged at NAMB to be on the front lines of seeing God work through these resources."

The AAEO accounts for 45% of NAMB's annual budget, with 36% provided by church gifts through the

Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program. One hundred percent of AAEO gifts are used to jointly support more than 5,000 missionaries and their ministries with state Baptist convention partners. Most of the missionary force is involved in starting new churches and various evangelistic endeavors.

The 2007 offering goal is \$57 million. The offering will be promoted in Southern Baptist churches in March beginning with the Week of Prayer for North American Missions, March 4-11.

The national mission offering was established by wMu in 1895 to support SBC missionaries in the United States. In 1934, the offering was named in honor of Annie Armstrong, WMU's founder and tireless champion of missions.

For more information about AAEO and the Week of Prayer for North American Missions, visit www.anniearmstrong.com. Week of Prayer missionaries will be highlighted in the March issue of Missions Mosaic, a publication of wMu.



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Dear Legislator ...

The 2007 session of the Mississippi Legislature is revving up to full speed, as proposed legislation moves to committees and will soon be coming up on a series of deadlines.

As anyone knows who even casually tracks the annual three-month sessions of the Legislature, many bills are introduced but relatively few make it into law. The complex set of checks and balances both inside the legislative process and in the broader branches of state government have a tendency to winnow the hundreds and hundreds of bills that are filed and pre-filed for each session.

Legislators have to absorb their share of criticism, cynicism, and caricature during their time under the hoary domes of the New Capitol in downtown Jackson. Some of the ridicule showered on them is likely deserved (by some of them, anyway), but a fair amount is not deserved.

They are, after all, our fellow Mississippians. For every citizen who couldn't find their way to either chamber in the Capitol but feels free to regularly slam legislators, there are at least a few of us who realize that most legislators are well-meaning people who must put aside their families, businesses, and community activities for one-quarter of each year to come to Jackson for the session.

That's no small sacrifice, so it would behoove us to occasionally tell them how much we appreciate the effort even as we loudly complain about what we perceive they are doing or not doing.

The Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission (CAC) has some helpful hints on how to make contact with legislators, how to get a point across without dooming favored legislation, and how to follow up on the progress of important measures:

- **The best communicating is done face-to-face.** Make an appointment and be

on time. Bring an outline of the one or two main issues you want to discuss. Be brief, recommend specific solutions, and leave a written summary of your important points.

It's fair to ask the legislator for his/her position on the bills in which you are interested. Don't take it personally if the legislator disagrees. Rather than argue, discuss differences in a pleasant manner.

- **If a personal visit is not possible, write your legislator.** Writing can save a legislator's time (a plus in your favor) and provides a record of your position on proposed legislation. Include your full name, address, and telephone number. The address for legislators while in session is P.O. Box 1018, Jackson, MS 39215-1018.

Individual e-mail addresses can be accessed at www.ls.state.ms.us

- **Do your research.** Know the bills about which you are writing, and include any specific information you have such as the bill number and details. Bill status can be attained by calling (601) 359-3719 while the legislature is in session, or by going to www.ls.state.ms.us.

- **Telephone calls do not substitute for personal visits and letters.** When telephoning legislators, however, make efficient use of your time with them. Identify yourself and the bills you are for or against (again, one or two main issues is a good limit). Explain your reasoning and let them know how you want them to vote.

The telephone number for legislators while they are in session is (601) 359-3770 (House) and (601) 359-3267 (Senate). Just as with personal visits and letters, end the conversation by expressing your thanks for their time.

- **Citizens can request to testify before committees about bills they strongly support or oppose.** Find out the name of the appropriate committee chair-

IT'S GOOD TO FEEL NEEDED AGAIN.



man and contact him as soon as possible. If given the opportunity to testify, get to the point quickly and be prepared to answer any questions legislators may have about your position.

The CAC, a ministry funded by the Mississippi Cooperative Program, stands ready to assist Mississippi Baptists who want to get involved in this grand process of self-governance we enjoy in our state and nation. They can be reached at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3329 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 329. Fax: (601) 292-3350. E-mail: rwood@christianaction.com.

Take the time to get involved, or else just be content with whatever comes out of the legislative pipeline. Those are really our only two choices.

GUEST OPINION:



Our right to pray

By Mike Johnson
Alliance Defense Fund

and the First Amendment's protection of religious freedom.

Yet somehow, for all the ACLU's aggressive efforts in courtrooms across America to eliminate invocations at city council meetings and graduation exercises and public events, prayer persists. People just keep talking to God — and some of them insist on doing it right out loud.

Loud leftists are especially fond of citing that old Quaker quote about "speaking truth to power." It gives them courage — the idea of standing up to a gracious, polite society, calling for the decimation of the essential tenets of Western civilization — with no one to back them up but an omnipresent mass media, a posse of increasingly activist judges, and the glittery Hollywood Thought Police.

The irony, though, is that public prayer is the ultimate way of speaking truth to power. At the 1994 National Prayer Breakfast, Mother Teresa, invited to share a few words, responded with some stabbing-ly plain truths about abortion:

Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love one another but to use any violence to get what they want. This is why the greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion.

Those words brought hundreds to their feet, but not President Bill Clinton, First Lady Hillary Clinton, Vice President Al Gore, or his wife Tipper. Seats planted, faces set like stone, the quartet gazed, dazed, on the wizened

old face of wisdom and sat powerless, for a moment, in the face of the truth.

The truth is not always something most of us (including the ACLU crowd) are fond of hearing. The truth is, people have a right to speak publicly not only their vulgarities, but their beliefs. People have a right to distribute publicly not only atheist journals and non-religious books but Bibles and Gospel tracts, too. A community has a right to publicly celebrate its heritage even when that history is Christian.

There's still a difference between acknowledging a faith and endorsing it, and there is a power greater than mere government, stronger than any law, and more enduring than any microphone or TV camera.

When as individuals, churches, communities, a nation, we speak His truth, that power can change anything.

Even the hearts of the ACLU.

Johnson is senior legal counsel with the Alliance Defense Fund (www.telladf.org), an organization that defends religious liberties. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press. For more information on Religious Freedom Day, visit www.religiousfreedomday.com.

Mannings help fulfill Miss. family's dream

GREENVILLE, Miss. (BP and special reports) — Football legend Archie Manning and his NFL quarterback sons Peyton and Eli always have been special to Mark Kelly.

"I guess my relationship with the Manning family began the same way any other person's in the Mississippi Delta did: I was born," said Kelly, youth minister at Emmanuel Church in Greenville.

Archie Manning grew up in the small Delta town of Drew, where he was a standout athlete. He went on to achieve All-American status in football and baseball at Ole Miss, and he became a star quarterback for the New Orleans Saints.

In the fall of 2006, a phone call from Archie Manning proved to be among the happiest moments for Mark's wife Kris amid a deadly battle with cancer. The disease claimed Kris' life on Oct. 23 of last year. Yet another gracious gesture from Manning came to Kelly and his daughters Kayden and Cassidy a few weeks later.

"All those things brought a ray of light in a very dark situation and made my wife happy," Kelly recalled. "That will never be forgotten. Cancer can't steal that from my girls."

While the Mannings were in Kelly's sports DNA, Kris wasn't so fond of the famous football family until they started dating each other.

"I can remember being offended that she had never even heard of the Manning family when I first met and fell in love with her," Kelly said of Archie, father of Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning and New York Giants quarterback Eli

(who also followed in his father's footsteps at Ole Miss).

"It didn't take her long to find out she had better familiarize herself real quick," Kelly said.

"She still wasn't all that impressed until she started watching [Peyton] play at the University of Tennessee," Kelly continued. "She immediately became a fan of Peyton, not just because of his quarterback ability but how he handled himself on and off the field."

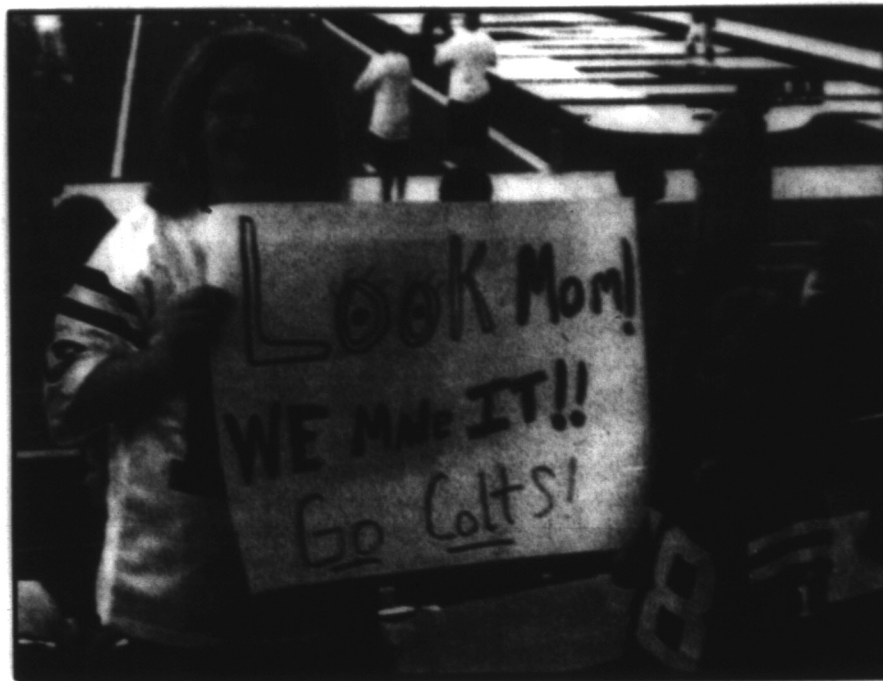
When the Indianapolis Colts drafted Peyton Manning, the Kellys instantly became fans of the team, who will face the New England Patriots on Sunday in the AFC Championship game. Kris' admiration of the quarterback family grew stronger after reading "Mannings." Written by Archie Manning, the book gave Kris an insight into a family she knew little about at the time.

For their 10th wedding anniversary in November 2000, Mark surprised Kris with a trip to see the Colts play the Patriots.

"That was an awesome time for both of us and in the top three unbelievable experiences we had in 16 years of marriage," Kelly said.

While Kelly has experienced such tragedies in his life as watching his brother and best friend die from gunshot wounds, he said the worst day of his life was on July 6, 2002, when doctors diagnosed Kris with cancer.

In October 2006, when Kris received a personal phone call from Archie Manning. For the few minutes they talked, Kelly said it seemed like cancer had left her body. "Those 10 minutes on the phone with Archie were special, but not the best for her," Kelly said of his wife, a school-



SPECIAL GAME — Kayden and Cassidy Kelly, at an Indianapolis Colts game, hold up a sign for their deceased mother. Stricken with terminal cancer, it was Kris Kelly's desire that her husband Mark, youth minister at Emmanuel Church, Greenville, take the two girls to see the Colts play. (BP special photo)

teacher in Greenville. "Her best 10 minutes were when she was taking a kid with a bad home life and making him feel special. Even though she wasn't feeling that very well with cancer, she tried her best to make an impact in others' lives."

Mark and Kris had planned to travel to Indianapolis in the fall to watch the Colts play but by then, Kris' condition had deteriorated so much that Mark canceled their trip.

When he broke the news to her, she was quite upset, Kelly recalled. "By the time I calmed her down, reality set in and she understood why we couldn't go to the game. That is when she started the slide, I believe."

On Oct. 16, 2006, Kris left the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson so she could spend her remaining days with her family and friends in Greenville. A week later, she passed away.

"Watching her die is something I never want to relive," Kelly said, "but when she left this world, the only thing I could say is it's OK. I kept saying it over and over. She was OK, but my life wasn't. She was done with it

and didn't have to wait for more CAT scans or PET scan results. That's OK and all right with me."

Two weeks after Kris died, Kelly received an extraordinary surprise. Thanks to a series of phone calls from friends in Mississippi, Kelly and his two daughters received tickets to a Colts game on the 10-yard line courtesy of Archie Manning and the Colts organization, along with three complimentary nights at the Radisson Hotel and a courtesy limousine to fulfill a promise Kelly made to his wife — taking his girls to watch the Colts play.

Reminiscing on the experience, Kelly emphasized that while the Mannings have been a special part of the family's life, there is much more to life than just football.

"Our lives wrapped around our family and loving and helping each other," Kelly said. "It makes Kris' journey through cancer mean something when her story touches somebody's life and that makes it OK. I can breathe another breath because someone else's life has been touched by what we have been through."

Believers executed

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The Democratic People's Republic of North Korea is well-known as a country where Christians are persecuted for their faith. Because the government there keeps a tight lid on communication, however, only rarely does specific information leak out. This month, details about four Christians executed for their faith have been released through the World Bible Translation Center's Gary Bishop. One man who worked as an evangelist was executed after being caught with two Korean New Testaments in his possession, Bishop told Mission Network News. A woman and her grandmother were washing clothes when a New Testament fell out of the woman's clothing. Somebody reported it, and both she and her grandmother were quickly executed. An army general who had become a believer was caught evangelizing men in his unit and was executed by a fellow officer. Despite the oppression, God seems to be working, Bishop said. "People are looking for an answer other than their own government, and I believe that's awakening the resilience of believers in North Korea to say, 'We have another answer. There is another way to believe.'" Meanwhile, the president of a Christian organization that helps poor people in Honduras has gone into hiding after a lawyer for the group was murdered in December. Carlos Hernandez of the Association for a More Just Society received a death threat immediately after an associate, attorney Dionisio Diaz Garcia, was shot to death on his way to court. Steve Geurink of Worldwide Christian Schools told Mission Network News. Hernandez was meeting with church and community leaders, families, teachers and school boards in the capital city of Tegucigalpa about a Christian school improvement process, Geurink said. His success may have caused corrupt elements in the local government to feel threatened.

Looking back

10 years ago

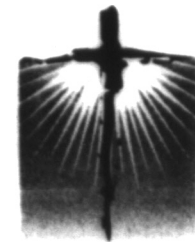
"Magnificent sound honoring God," is the way Graham Smith describes the Jan. 27 premiere engagement of the Mississippi Baptist Symphony Orchestra during the 1997 Mississippi Baptist Evangelism Conference at Broadmoor Church, Jackson.

20 years ago

North Delta Association hosts an open house and dedication for its new office and ministry center at 2400 4th Street, Clarksdale. M.C. Johnson is director of missions; Jim Harris is ministry center director.

60 years ago

Marian Leavell, Oxford, begins her 26th year as director of Baptist student work on the Ole Miss campus. There are 999 students at the college who claim Baptist as religious preference.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND
FRONT PAGE

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INTEGRITY

Integrity is a word that gets tossed around in virtually every sector of society. In 2005, one online directory reported that more people logged on to find the meaning of integrity than any other word. Politicians talk about it. Preachers praise it. Sports figures struggle with it as they reveal whether they have been on any performance enhancing drugs or steroids. Christians should express it in everything they say and do.

In its simplest form integrity means to do the right thing. It is not just to live according to the letter of the law. It is to live in the letter and the spirit of the law. How many times have we seen people who have walked on the edge of actions that would be just close enough to the line where if they were caught they could say, "Oops?"

The person of integrity simply lives with a passionate desire to do right. It is always a special time, a holy of holies kind of moment when you get to see someone who has impeccable integrity and does the right thing whether others see or know or even if their actions that crossed the line could be explained away.

I was recently visiting with a friend of mine who is now retired from active ministry. Sometime ago he was going to buy a new car. One of his kin-folks worked for a large automotive firm that gives a significant discount to the employees and to a select family group of those employees. My friend asked his distant relative if he could get the discount. He told him he thought he could and that he would send him the papers to fill out, sign, and return. Upon receiving the papers, the retired pastor read them and knew he did not exactly fit the terms of the agreement. He sent them back incomplete and unsigned with a note of explanation that he really did

not fit the criteria. A five percent rebate on the thousands of dollars he was going to pay for the car was going to be rather sizeable, but he would not do it. Why? Well, for one thing his relative, who would have signed off on the agreement and savings, was not a Christian. Two, although he could get by with it, it was not the right thing to do, and he had integrity.

Olán Strange was a great Old Testament Bible professor at New Orleans Seminary for years. He understood the Word of God and loved the book. He had wonderful and exciting insights into the things of God. He was one of my favorites. Strange always kept his car in immaculate condition. Once when he was trading cars, the vehicle that he was going to trade had over 175,000 miles. In the negotiation for the trade, the salesman told him that they could bump up the amount they would give him if he would just agree to say that the car had 75,000 miles on it rather than disclosing that it had 175,000 miles.

Strange declined the increased benefits and said something to the effect that he had walked the same path for over 50 years and he did not intend to change now. He exhibited integrity. No one may have ever known but him and the car salesman, but God would have known, and he wasn't going to disappoint Him in a car sale.

One of the greatest demonstrations of courage and personal integrity that I have ever seen took place at the State Bible Drills by a young guy

who had worked so hard at the church level, made the grade in his association, and went on to the state contest. I believe you could only have three mistakes that year. If you looked up the wrong passage, got the wrong answer, and even if you weren't called upon you were to raise your hand to let the judges know you had made a mistake. Three mistakes and you would not be a state winner.

The Bible Drill was going on, and the young man who had worked so hard and wanted to be a state winner in Bible Drill had two mistakes already. A third one and he would miss his chance of being a state winner. The part of the drill that was in process involved the person in charge calling out a particular section of Scripture, a key passage. The drillers were to find where it was in the Bible and give the key passage, title, and Scripture location. The subject was called out, the Bibles were opened, the drillers quickly found their place, and stepped out to let the judges know that they had located the passage. For example, suppose the Prodigal Son was called and at the signal given everybody started looking for Luke 15. What would happen if you found Mark 15 or even Luke 17? If you were called on you might give the wrong answer, but if not called on you could just stand there even if you had turned to the wrong place. Time began, the young man found the passage he was looking for, stepped out, and someone else was called on to tell where it was found. This young man had

looked up the wrong passage. Slowly and heartbreakingly he raised his hand, and that meant he had too many mistakes and could not be a state winner.

He did not receive the state winner award, but he would have if he had just stood there and not raised his hand. No one would have ever known, and he would have gone home a victorious state Bible Drill winner. Instead, realizing that he had turned to the wrong passage, he raised his hand knowing that the self-imposed penalty would be that he would not receive what he had worked for so desperately. For those of us who knew, we could see the anguish on his face, and we could feel his pain. While the moment was painfully sad, you almost wanted to jump up out of your seat and praise God for a young man who had enough integrity to do the right thing.

All of us face those moments when we must make a decision when no one else will probably know and the outcome will be self-serving and beneficial to us if we just let it slide. Integrity simply does the right thing in the right spirit regardless of the outcome. Christian businessmen putting together a deal can often ignore integrity and get a better break. Many marriages fall into jeopardy and disrepair because at the moment someone does not exercise integrity. Athletes can play the game and win some of the contests by living on the edge of the rules and not having integrity, but in the long run the two people you always have to deal with know that you messed up.

One is the all-knowing ever-seeing Father above, and the other is the person you see in the mirror. Regardless of what the world thinks or sees, the person who lives with integrity is always the winner.

The author may be contacted at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. E-mail: jfutral@mbcb.org.



Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Directions



YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)

2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)

3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)

4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

MS POSITIONS

EIGHTH AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH, Meridian, Miss., seeking bi-vocational music leader. Please send resumes to 801 C St, Meridian MS 39301 Attn: music committee, or email it to: jquimby@goBTC.com.

EPHESUS BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING a full-time Minister of Youth and Recreation. Job requires working with youth and children and Scheduling Family-Life Center events: Send resume to Dr. Jim Everett, 3495 Ephesus Road, Forest, MS 39074 or e-mail: jimincebc@earthlink.net.

MORRISON CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cleveland, Miss., is seeking a full-time minister of students. Average youth attendance is 30-40. Excellent outreach opportunities. Please send resume to Morrison Chapel Baptist Church, James Lindsey, 990 Township Road, Merigold, MS 38759.

MORRISON CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cleveland, Miss., is seeking a part-time

minister of music. Please send resume to Morrison Chapel Baptist Church, James Lindsey, 990 Township Road, Merigold, MS 38759.

THE METRO BAPTIST ASSOCIATION is seeking resumes for the position of Associational Missions Director. Metro Association comprises Hinds and Madison counties. MBA has 82 churches and over 70,000 members. Resumes may be sent to: Search Committee; 6530 Dogwood View Parkway; Jackson, MS 39213. Deadline for receiving resumes is March 1, 2007.

ROSE HILL FBC, ROSE HILL, MISS., is seeking a bivocational worship leader/ minister of music. Please send resumes to Rose Hill FBC P.O. Box 1 Rose Hill, MS 39356, attn: Worship Leader search committee. You may email to: ebmartin@bayspringstel.net or view our website: www.rosehillfbc.org. Pastor: Bro. Eddie Martin.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF CROSSETT, Arkansas, is seeking a full-time children's minister. Resumes may be sent to 701 Main Street, Crossett, AR 71635.

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

January 25, 2007

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

Pray this day for...

January 26 – February 8, 2007

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"If the church wants a better pastor, it only needs to pray for the one it has."

Christian One-liners

Please pray for the 700 Yari people of Colombia, South America, to understand who God is and to see their need for Him. Animistic in belief, there are no known believers among them. They live in communal huts along the river in the Amazon jungle. Their livelihood is fishing, hunting, and gathering fruits.

An international worker has returned to field ministry in India. Please pray that as he adjusts again, the relationships made previously and the seeds sown before will become a fruitful harvest so that the Lord will be glorified among the Rajasthani Muslims.

Missionaries in Kigali, Rwanda, ask: "This week as you seek God on behalf of Rwanda, pray specifically for the capital city, Kigali. Most in this central African urban center do not know Jesus as Lord and Savior. Pray that the Holy Spirit will move across this city and land, convicting men and women of sin."

Thank God for all who came into the kingdom during numerous and intensive Christmas outreaches all throughout China. Pray that God will guard these young brothers and sisters from the evil one as they grow to spiritual maturity. Pray that from their earliest days as believers, they will grasp the importance of sharing their faith with others.

Remember to lift up the university student leadership team of Botswana as they look forward to the new semester. These six students did an exceptional job in their various ministries last term. Pray that they will be able to grow their teams and mobilize them to reach the University of Botswana for Christ.

(1) VBS Jump Start, Liberty BC, Flowood (SS); (2) Pray for the David Dean Mission House at the center of Baptist Outreach in New York City. Lift up Jack and Becky Snyder, missionaries, as they host the people from churches all over the U.S. coming for mission opportunities (700 so far this year). Pray that the volunteers touch many for the Lord.

Michele Adcock in Centennial, Colo., is a consultant with the Colorado convention on the prayer and evangelism team. Pray for dedicated prayer warriors to become involved in praying across the state of Colorado.

(1) 7th-9th Baptist Building AT HOME DAYS; (2) Darren Hales is a new church planter in Helena, Mont. Praise God for five professions of faith and two baptisms recently. Pray for Hales' family as they build relationships with the people in their surrounding community.

(1) True Love Waits (D&FM-Youth); (2) Edwina Robinson Special Day Offering (NNU); (3) Mississippi Baptist Church Music Conference, Brandon BC (CM); (4) Jorge Melendez is a new work strategist for the Illinois State Association. Praise God for all the lay people who are willing to give their time to help plant new Bible studies in Illinois.

Ask the Lord to encourage the hearts of Pastors B, M and S as they share the message of salvation with Northern Peoples in the large urban areas of Ghana. The indigenous population considers them as "the lowest of the low," and their job is often frustrating and difficult. Pray that God will continue to grant them strength, wisdom, grace and needed resources.

(1) Area Keyboard Festivals: Carterville BC, Petal; Hernando BC, Hernando; FBC, Pascagoula (CM); (2) Kirk Ritchey, Annapolis, Md., is the director of Baptist Student Ministry in Annapolis. Pray that God would provide volunteer teams to assist with remodeling their 1869 Student Center and that God would provide a retired person to serve as an administrative assistant.

The elderly people of Delhi, India are often the ones who maintain spiritual practices in their homes. Pray that the elderly heads of families will have the ability to see that truth lies only in Jesus.

(1) Area Keyboard Festivals: Emmanuel BC, Grenada; North Greenwood BC, Greenwood (CM); (2) Pray for Algerian Arab women learning French and English in France. Ask God to empower the teachers to be constant witnesses of His light and love. Pray that the women who come to the center for lessons will see Jesus in the lives of the workers.

(1) Christian Education Clinic, Highland BC, Meridian (D&FM); (2) A missionary in Dakar, Senegal, wants to begin a chronological Bible storying group in her home with neighborhood women and others. Pray that God will work out the logistics on a time, and that many will come hear God's Word.

The 29th Annual Meeting of the MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CHURCH MUSIC CONFERENCE

February 1-3, 2007

Thursday noon - Saturday noon
Brandon Baptist Church
Brandon

PROGRAM PERSONALITIES:

Jamie Meaders
Mary McDonald
L. Lavon Gray
Laura Leathers
Slaten Murphy
Louis White
Ian Richardson
Milfred Valentine
Jerry Talley
David Young
Melinda Hand
Larry Futral

For more info:
MBCB Church Music
Department
601-292-3267
1-800-748-1651
palford@mbcb.org

STATE MINISTRY ASSISTANTS CONFERENCE

February 10-12, 2007
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JOIN the TEAM

FEATURING



CHARLOTTE READY, a native of Monticello, Miss., has been serving as full-time minister of music at Monticello Baptist Church for 10 years. She completed her degree in music education at the University of Southern Mississippi. Charlotte has been happily married to her husband, Bill, for 37 years and has three children and six grandchildren. Charlotte is no stranger to Mississippi Baptist Ministry Assistants — she was the worship leader in April 2002.

More info in brochure ... coming soon!

Pastor/Leadership Development Department

JIM FUTRAL has pastored Southern Baptist Convention churches for the past 35 years — most recently Broadmoor Baptist Church, Jackson — and currently serves as executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. He received both his master of divinity and doctorate of ministry from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Jim is married to the former Shirley Fay Moore of Bessemer, Ala., and has three children and six grandchildren.

[illegible]

[illegible]

1. **Mississippi College** will hold its fourth annual Jazz Band Dinner, A Sentimental Journey, Feb. 9 at 7 p.m. in Anderson Hall, located in the B. C. Rogers student Center on the college campus. The coat and tie event, sponsored by the MC Friends of Music, raises annual support and awareness for MC's music programs and scholarships. Guests will enjoy dinner prepared by Chef Patrick Friley, executive chef for Sodexo from New Orleans. Musical entertainment will be provided by the MC Jazz Band. There also will be a silent auction that will featuring art by faculty, students, and local artists such as Sam Gore, Robert Sugg, Tracy H. Sugg, and Mark Millett. Other auction items include donations by local businesses and vacation packages. The proceeds from selected art works will also support the art program at Mississippi College. Tickets are \$25 per person and may be purchased by calling the Mississippi College President's Office, (601)925-3201. Shown are professors James Meaders and Randy Miley.

2. Chuck Kelley, President of New Orleans Seminary, will bring the annual Evangelism lectures at **Mississippi College** Feb. 5-6. The lecture series includes a Monday night lecture at 7 p.m. with a reception following. Kelley will speak on Evangelism issues during the Tuesday afternoon session from 1-4 p.m. Light refreshments will be provided. The event will take place in Anderson Hall above the B.C. Rogers Student Center on the college campus. All pastors and laypeople are cordially invited to attend. There is no charge for this event. Kelley will also speak during MC's Tuesday chapel service at 10:50 a.m. in the sanctuary of First Church, Clinton.



Kelley



1. Fourth Annual Jazz Band Dinner, MC

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PENNIES, LEGISLATION AND A TRIBUTE

By Jimmy Porter



First, pennies are still being placed in The Memorial to the Missing. To those of you who have emphasized The Memorial to the Missing offering in your churches, thank you! This project is not about the pennies but about children who have been killed. Fifty million pennies will be helpful in preventing this tragedy in the future.

The Mississippi Baptist Convention recently mailed materials asking for a one-time offering to be taken in support of Sanctity of Human Life Sunday which was January 21. Many of you did not receive the materials in time to adequately prepare for the emphasis, but you can still participate. Choose any Sunday you desire and remember that the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board will take your checks, change them into pennies, and place them into the Memorial. This is the only memorial to aborted children that we know of in the world. Help us make it a reality.

The second thing of importance is that the 2007 Mississippi Legislature is in session and has had approximately 2,500 bills submitted. It is a tremendous task to view each of these bills, so pray for and encourage your senator and representative.

I will mention a few of these bills in general because you can go to <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us> and find each individual bill.

Education — It appears that education will be fully funded this year. The House, the Senate, and the

Governor have agreed that education must be a priority. The children of our state need a quality education, and perhaps this is a start.

Tobacco — Several bills have been introduced to raise tobacco taxes and to provide a statewide tobacco education program. This program will do the same thing "The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi" has been doing for years. Also, there is a bill entered to ban smoking in public places statewide. These proposed bills are good and will save Mississippi dollars in healthcare costs if passed and signed into law by the Governor.

Gambling — A couple of bills have been introduced to establish Highway 90 as prior to Hurricane Katrina as the point of reference for the casinos along the Gulf Coast. This certainly needs to be done. HB 478 and HB 569 are two bills that, if enacted, will involve the legislature and possibly the Gaming Commission in negotiating contracts with Indian tribes who attempt to locate casinos in our state. In my opinion, this needs to be done because currently all the power is in the hands of one individual, the Governor.

As usual, there are bills introduced to expand gambling whether it is video machines outside cruise vessels, etc. Most of these type bills never make it out of committee.

Pro-Life — SB 2801 has been introduced with the purpose of providing a mother the opportunity to see a sonogram of her developing child before she makes the final decision on abortion. Also, bill SB 2795, if passed, will ban abortion in Mississippi. Both of these bills need your interest and support.

Drugs — As usual, there are numerous bills entered to strengthen the DUI laws and to curtail underage drinking and driving under the influence. Unfortunately, most of these never make it out of committee, so ask your representative where he/she stands on these and other related bills.

Bills have been proposed that are designed to raise the minimum wage paid to workers, to lower taxes on groceries, and to limit the government's power to take private property for public use. If you have questions about these and other bills, please call the Christian Action Commission (601) 292-3329 or 1-800-748-1651, and we will attempt to give you an update.

Finally, a word about and a tribute to J. Clark Hensley who died January 12, 2007. Hensley was the first Executive Director of the Christian Action Commission and served in that role for 16 years. Upon his retirement he became Executive Director Emeritus. He was the author of 14 books, and his book *Preacher Behave* has been read by thousands of preachers over the years.

As the first director he provided quality leadership and insight that set the Commission on a firm foundation. There is no doubt our Lord greeted him with "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." We will all miss him, but as long as his book *Preacher Behave* is on someone's bookshelf, he will never be forgotten. May God bless his wife, Margaret Hensley, and the rest of the family. Thank you, J. Clark Hensley for a job well done!

Jimmy Porter is executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Wild Game Dinner, Calvary Church, Waynesboro



2. DiscipleNow, First Church, Magee

1. The Brotherhood of Calvary Church, Waynesboro, hosted a wild game cookout Jan. 15, including deer, wild hog, duck, deep fried turkey, raccoon, trout, rabbit, and shrimp. Over 200 people participated.

2. First Church, Magee, recently sponsored a DiscipleNow weekend. Shown are the participants.

3. Northside Church, Vicksburg, had a baby dedication Dec. 24. Shown are Felicia and Dusty Grantham with baby Cali; pastor Gene Jacks; and William and Nikki Houston and baby Abbigayle.

4. Calvary Church, Pascagoula, recently exceeded their Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal. Shown are Bobby Hinger, Wendy Hinger, Merle Ivy, standing; seated are the RAs and GAs.

5. Fernwood Church, Gulfport, will host a Valentine's banquet Feb. 3, 6 p.m. Food, fellowship, and prizes will be included. Free admission. For information, visit www.life-waylink.com/2288964556.



3. Baby Dedication, Northside Church, Vicksburg



4. Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, Calvary Church, Pascagoula

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

What Hope For Society?

Genesis 11:1-9; Proverbs 28: 2-5; 29: 2-4

By Gloria Lofton

In our studies thus far in Creation Faith: Living By God's Design, we have seen the creation of man, his fall, God's provisions for him after the fall, God's judgement upon the wicked, and His protection of His favored servant. Again this week we are looking at God's judgement upon a group of people who had chosen to defy God and make for themselves a name. Again, God's intervention shows He interacts with people groups and nations as well as individuals.

In Genesis 11: 1-4 we read: "And the whole earth was one language, and of one speech. As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there. They said to each other, Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly."

They used bricks instead of stone, and tar for mortar. Then they said, "come let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth." (NIV)

The land of Shinar was around the Euphrates valley, the locality usually regarded as the Cradle of Civilization; the area of Southern Mesopotamia that included Babylon and Accad. It is generally accepted that Shinar is that portion of Mesopotamia known to secular history as Sumer, the political entity to which Abraham's Ur belonged.

The tower in verse 4, most commentaries agree, refers to a Mesopotamian-style ziggurat. No one knows for certain why ziggurats were built, or how they were used. They were part of



Lofton

temple complexes, so they were probably connected with religion. It is believed they were also used as watchtowers and towers of defense.

Verses 5-8 tell us how God came down to the city. He understood the spirit, the motive and the selfish plans of the rebellious people.

Immediately He set out to upset their foolish schemes. The very thing they had sought to avoid came suddenly upon them. God directly intervened to confuse their language so one could not understand the other. He scattered them far and wide.

In our background scripture of Genesis 12:1-9, we read the account of Abram's calling by God to leave his country, kindred, and his father's house and travel to a land God would show him. Notice Abram's immediate obedience to God. He asked no questions, but acted on his faith in God that He was faithful to do what He had promised. In contrast, the people who built the tower were acting on their

own, thinking only of their own self-preservation.

Verse 9 says, "That is why it was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth." (NIV) Webster describes Babel as, (1) A city where men tried to build a tower to reach heaven. (2) Noisy confusion as many people talking at once. Babel also means Babylon. Babylon was a city especially noted by the Hebrews for its magnificence, wealth and wickedness.

Proverbs 25-29 is a collection of proverbs on various topics attributed to Solomon and copied during Hezekiah's reign in Judah. (Proverbs 25:1) A number of these Proverbs contain direct application to the collective life and well-being of an organized society, as in the scriptures that follow. Proverbs 28:2-5; "When a country is rebellious it has many rulers, but a man of understanding and knowledge maintains order. A ruler who oppresses the poor is like a driving rain that leaves no crops. Those who forsake the

law praise the wicked, but those who keep the law resist them. Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it fully." (NIV)

In chapter 29:2-4 we read, "When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice, When the wicked rule, the people groan. A man who loves wisdom brings joy to his father but a companion of prostitutes squanders his wealth." (NIV) God's people can help strengthen their communities by standing against social vices such as prostitution. Such vices result in broken families and financial ruin for many people, and bring other evils into the communities with them.

What is the hope of society? God fearing Christians who still pray and seek God's leadership in their actions and use their influence to uphold our Christian leaders. I pray that we as Christians will seek to help make our communities more Christ-like, and therefore make our society a safer place for those who come after us.

Lofton is a member of Willow Grove Church, Collins.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Keeping Commitments

Nehemiah 11:1-13:31

By Tim Alexander

As we conclude the study of Nehemiah, we can appreciate and admire Nehemiah's leadership qualities. Nehemiah was first a man of prayer. Twelve times Nehemiah looked toward heaven first before he tackled any task here on earth. Second, Nehemiah was a great administrator who stayed laser focused on his mission. Nehemiah also knew his role as a leader. When Nehemiah used Ezra's priestly role for the dedication of the wall, Nehemiah knew that he was not the spiritual leader for this event. Nehemiah, the fearless leader, was governor for twelve years during his term. Chapter 13 expands on Nehemiah's second term as governor. Chapter 13 also outlines the reforms during his second administration. Nehemiah had returned to Jerusalem after a visit to king

Artaxerxes and now had to cope with the Israelites not honoring their commitment to God. Accountability is a must for growth. The Israelites failed the Jewish community as well as their written agreement with God.

1. Honoring God's House, Nehemiah 13:1,4-5, 8-9

Verse one reveals the impact the Word of God has on a person's life. Our friends, the Gideons, often remind us of the verse that says the Word of God will not return void. The book of Moses was read aloud, and the Jews quickly learned that two groups were excluded from the fellowship. Longtime opposition to the Jews, the Ammonites and Moabites were the groups left out. During the exodus these two nations refused in any way to help the Jews. Just to add insult to injury, these nations hired Balaam to pronounce a



Alexander

curse upon the Jews. But the Lord of Glory turned this curse into a blessing. This reminds me of Joseph's words, when Joseph told his brothers, what you meant for evil God meant for good. The Lord has a unique way of using our hurts and pain for His gain.

Some actions deserve swift decisions. The Jews not only married into Ammonites and the Moabites families, but Tobiah, an Ammonite, was illegally living in a large room of the Temple. Nehemiah swiftly and decisively threw all Tobiah's household possessions out. Keep in mind, Tobiah and Sanballat have pestered Nehemiah for years. After the expulsion of Tobiah, Nehemiah ordered the Temple room to be purified. The outright defilement of the Temple by the enemy required purification.

2. Bring God's Tithes, Nehemiah 13:10-12

After Nehemiah had returned to the Holy city, he also found the Levites and the singers had not been paid during his absence. Lack of financial support had

forced them to return to farming. Nehemiah brought the Levites and singers back to their positions at the Temple. Nehemiah restored the tithe of grain, oil and wine offerings. In addition, Nehemiah reformed the treasurers over the storehouses; he wanted to ensure proper payments to be correctly distributed.

3. Keep The Lord's Day, Nehemiah 13:15-18

Nehemiah noticed that people were selling fish and other items on the Sabbath day. Business as usual was the theme in Jerusalem before Nehemiah's reforms stopped the trading and selling during the Sabbath. Nehemiah held the secular officials responsible for the business of trade and work on the Sabbath. He rebuked the leaders and held them accountable. Nehemiah's Sabbath reforms worked, and the gates of the city were closed for commerce. God's steadfast love and Nehemiah's resolve restored order and reverence to Jerusalem.

After standing on the promises and celebrating the completion of the wall, the emotion quickly faded and so did their vows to God. Apathy set in, and

the promise they made to God would soon be broken. Relapse of the old ways set in. What happened after Christ was crucified? Peter, the fisherman, started fishing again. He went back to the profession he was comfortable with.

Churches today should be the temple of Nehemiah's day; it should be a place where God is worshiped in spirit and in truth. The place of worship is Holy Ground. Many times we have spoken the words, "We are standing on Holy ground." As Nehemiah learned, we should all be good stewards of God's tithe. I have heard about "blue laws." In the past laws were written to prohibit the sale of items on Sunday. These laws were abandoned. Our Sabbath- Sunday should be a day of rest, not business as usual. Sunday should be the day set aside to renew our focus on a Holy God. Each Sunday, we should also gain a new and fresh perspective from God's Word and spend time in prayer.

Alexander is Minister of Education, Harrisburg Church, Tupelo.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted.



Photograph attachments are permissible. Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to crop-

ping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

Bibliocipher

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VZP TNVVS.

BECA CZGPCW: CZGPCW-

GKYRC

Clue: W = Y

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Twenty-One:Twenty-Five.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

6. Several families of Calvary Church, Pascagoula, participated in the lighting of Advent candles. Shown are the participants.
7. Several deacons of New Home Church, Fulton, were honored with certificates of excellence. Shown are Stevie Jones, Jimmy Dale Sartin, and George Johnston.
8. Lakeside Church, Hattiesburg, exceeded their Lottie Moon Offering goal of \$500 by giving \$710.
9. Concord Church, Pelahatchie, will host Jerry Trammell in concert Jan. 28, 7 p.m. A love offering will be taken.
10. Ingomar Church, New Albany, accepted the Blue Mountain College challenge to make Martin Luther King Day "a day on, not a day off," by cleaning at the Ingomar Attendance Center.
11. First Church, Jackson, is hosting Priscilla Evans Shirer Feb. 23, 7 p.m. and Feb. 24, 9 a.m. Tickets are available at the church, selected area Christian bookstores, by phone at (800) 965-9324 or at www.itickets.com.

www.mbc.org



6. Lighting of Advent Candles, Calvary Church, Pascagoula



7. Deacons Honored, New Home Church, Fulton

STATE CHANGES



1. Fellowship Church, Taylorsville, has called Cary E. Bass as bivocational pastor. Shown are Bass, Cindy Bass, and children Candice and Caleb Bass.

OBITUARIES

J. Clark Hensley, 94, died at Highland Home, Ridgeland, Jan. 12. The memorial service was held at 11 a.m. Tuesday at Northminster Church, Jackson. A private family burial will be held at Lakewood Memorial Park.

He was born June 16, 1912 in Sullivan County, Mo., ordained to the ministry at the age of 18, and graduated from William Jewell College in 1935. He earned both a Master of Theology and Doctor of Theology degree from Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., where he also served as adjunct professor in Religious Education and Counseling. He served pastorates in Missouri and Tennessee before moving to Jackson, Miss., in 1958 to become Director of Missions for the Hinds County Baptist Association. He became the first Executive Director of the Christian Action Commission, Mississippi Baptist Convention, in 1966 and retired in that role in 1982. Named Executive Director Emeritus, he later became a consultant in Family Ministry Programs for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and took a second retirement in 1990.

Hensley was the author of fourteen books ranging from biography to a wide variety of topics related to Christian family ministry. His first book, *The Pastor as Educational Director*, became a standard text in many colleges and seminaries. He received the Distinguished Service Award from the Christian Life

Commission, Southern Baptist Convention, in 1975 for leadership in social ethics, and was presented the Brooks Hays Christian Citizenship award in 1992. He served for ten years as the recording secretary of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and eight years on the board of the Radio and Television Commission, Southern Baptist Convention.

Survivors include his wife, Margaret Sipes Hensley of Clinton, Miss., and three sons: Gary Hensley, Birmingham, Ala.; Clark Hensley, Clinton; Dana Hensley, Brentwood, Tenn. Survivors also include his brother L.D. Hensley, sister Mrs. Emery Harris, three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Rev. G. E. Jolley, Sr., 86, of Batesville, died Jan. 11 at his residence. Services were held January 13 at Pope Church where he was Pastor Emeritus.

Jolley, born September 4, 1920, pastored churches in Mississippi and was Director of Missions for four counties, including Panola County, from which he retired in 1985.

Survivors include his wife of 66 years, Emma V. Jolley; daughter Doris Ann Jolley; son Gil Jolley, Jr. and wife, Becky; four granddaughters; six great grandchildren and eleven nieces and nephews.

The family requests that memorials may be sent to Southern Care Hospice, 465 Hwy 6 East, Batesville, MS; Panola County Baptist Association, Hwy 51 North, Batesville, MS; or Pope Church, Pope, MS.

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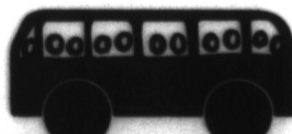
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